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The Bureau of Land Management Service Center Newsletter September 1991

CENTER SCENE

NEW FACES IN HIGH PLACES

Linda Colville

The new Associate Service Center Director, Linda S. Colville, will be reporting here in early September. Born in Indiana, Linda attended the University of Maryland, where she received a bachelor of science degree in technology management. She also has a master's degree in public administration from George Mason University. Linda has several years of experience in personnel with the U.S. Army, as well as program analysis experience with the Office of the Secretary of Defense. Most recently, she served as a Professor of Systems Management at the National Defense University, Information Resources Management College, Department of Defense, in Washington, DC. Please welcome her on board!

WHAT IS THIS?

A Note From the Editor

Right now you're probably wondering, "What is this? What has happened to Center Scene?"

As you may recall, last January we did a survey of Center Scene readers to see how they felt about the newsletter. The result was that, for the most part, readers were happy with Center Scene the way it was. "So why have you changed it?" you're likely asking. "Don't you care about how we responded?"

We do care, and because we care, the look of the newsletter has changed considerably! Let me explain. In the survey responses, we received a number of comments that we should be using recycled paper. We agreed, and acted upon this. Working with Service Center Printing Specialist Carl Anderson, we found out that GPO only offers recycled paper in one color — white! We then had to weigh our options — which is more important, preserving the look of the newsletter or being environmentally conscientious?

We opted to go with the recycled paper regardless of the color change. But we then had another dilemma: should we stick with the old ink color or do we need to change for clarity and appearance against a white background? We decided a change in ink color was also necessary.

While we were at it, we decided to make the nameplate a little more contemporary, and to make some other minor changes to enhance readability. And why 8 pages? Because readers responded that they would like to see an occasional larger issue. These will be coming out quarterly and will feature two SC Divisions/Staffs.

Anyway, we don't want to bore you with the details, but we felt we owed you, our readers, some kind of explanation. We hope those of you who enjoyed the old newsletter will continue to enjoy it. We also hope those who didn't like it will give it another try!

WESTWARD HO!

BLM Director Cy Jamison has announced a major downsizing of the Washington, DC Headquarters staff. Some 225-250 personnel will be shifted to field offices in the western states, including BIFC, Phoenix Training Center, and the Service Center.

The downsizing is a result of BLM's commitment to better quality and service. BLM has established some very challenging goals for recreation, fish and wildlife, riparian area management, and other programs. The realignment effort will make the organization more efficient by putting more resources at the field level where they can do the most good.

Implementation of the downsizing has already begun. Detailed planning is now being done. Moves will take place in phases, probably beginning in about 6 to 8 months — some may take place sooner. The realignment should be substantially complete within 1 year.

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A LEARNING EXPERIENCE

by Sue Mielke

My participation in the Rotational Program to the Washington Office was an exciting learning experience for me. I left Colorado in June 1990 with great expectations of what I would like to experience during my 1 year there. Those expectations were met and many more opportunities were made possible for me!

The first week was filled with an orientation to all the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) programs given by each Division, office, and staff. In addition, I worked on my Individual Development Plan (IDP) and negotiated assignments with the various offices in which I wanted to work. This IDP changed several times during the year because even though I had prioritized the assignments I desired, I realized that 1 year would be much too short a time to do all I wanted.

In the design of the Rotation Program, two formal training courses were recommended.—"Congressional Operations" and "Federal Budget." I scheduled these early in my year and found them to be excellent courses. They were very helpful as I rotated through my various assignments and they helped me appreciate the daily news of Congress. Later in the year I took a "Congress and Natural Resources" course that really targeted BLM issues.

Experience in the Budget Office was a high priority for me and I scheduled October and November for working there. Congress played many games with the budget last fall, which made for an interesting experience but also delayed the process. This experience really broadened my knowledge of the budget process, gave me an excellent opportunity to review Preliminary Annual Work Plan (PAWP) submissions from several State Offices, provided an opportunity to work on several subactivities I had not been exposed to before, and through working on responses to their office, helped me gain a clearer picture of the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB's) role.

Some highlights of my other assignments include:

1. Working in Personnel on Bureauwide projects and activities that are not delegated to the field.
2. Gaining exposure to all the Bureaus and Offices of the Department through a 1-month assignment to the Department of the Interior (DOI).
3. Handling an EEO assignment that showed me how the system can and does work.
4. Working with program staffs to write narratives for some BLM brochures while assigned to Public Affairs.

5. Attending hearings on bills relating to BLM issues and observing Director Jamison testify several times while working in Congressional Affairs.
6. Observing different management styles and learning about important issues by shadowing the Director, both Deputy Directors, and the Director, Management Services.

In addition to all the work experiences, it was exciting to have so many new things to do on my own time. I tried to take in as much as I could of both the District of Columbia and the surrounding area. The District offers so much in the history of our country, but also museums, festivals, concerts, the zoo, parks, theater, and art. I sat in on oral arguments at the Supreme Court (shortly after the new Justice was appointed), visited both the House and Senate chambers several times, and went to many Congressional hearings. During my lunch time I could walk around the White House and monuments. It was fun to see the visiting dignitaries and Presidential motorcades.

For the Thanksgiving weekend I went to Williamsburg—what a great place to be for Thanksgiving and to feel almost a part of that early time period. Other things I enjoyed were Civil War battlefields, Philadelphia and all of it's history, Annapolis, Richmond, Monticello, Harpers Ferry, and the list goes on. If I missed our beautiful Colorado mountains, I could head west an hour and drive in the Shennandoahs to the highest point on the Skyline Drive, which was 3,500 feet above sea level!

I'll never forget the Foreign Affairs committee hearing I stopped in to observe for a few minutes on August 1 during a lunch break of a class I was attending on Capitol Hill. The rumor was that Iraq was invading Kuwait! I could hardly believe it, and the evening news did not even make mention of it, but the next day, that was almost the only news! It was an exciting time to be in Washington during the buildup of troops in the Persian Gulf and the short war itself. The National Victory Celebration on June 8 was truly wonderful with all the troops, their great displays on the Mall, and the parade with all the patriotic support!

I even lucked out on weather for the entire year. It was a mild summer (I was expecting that time to be the worst!) and the winter never existed. I could hardly believe the one day they sent us home at 11 a.m. when it was raining a little, but there was no snow! Actually, when I got to my apartment in Virginia, there was a little snow covering the grass, but none on the streets. Fall and spring were my favorite times. I have never seen so many flowers and blooming trees —it was truly spectacular.

During the year, I made many new friends among BLM employees. The Bureau has lots of really dedicated employees in Washington who believe strongly in our mission. They are a great bunch of people to be around. The year went much too quickly! There was so much more I wanted to observe, learn, and participate in. There were so many program areas I would have liked to have had at least some exposure to, but I am more than pleased for all the opportunities I did have. It was a great year!!

THE BEST FEW/NTP EVER *(so far)*

The 22nd Federally Employed Women/ National Training Program (FEW/NTP) realized several "firsts" and notable achievements:

- The first registration/invoice processing contractor was hired.
- The Opening Session featured *three* dynamic keynote speakers.
- Only 125 banquet and 125 luncheon meals went unserved.
- Twenty-six agencies held preconference meetings (including BLM).
- Attendance increased over 48 percent from the 1990 FEW/NTP.
- Over 2,075 hotel rooms were occupied.
- The first long-term (Track II) training was presented.
- The first day of the conference was moved up to Wednesday.
- Net profit is expected to increase over 66 percent from the 1990 NTP.
- Many of the Track I workshops enrolled over 100 or more participants.
- Over 24 hours of FEW/NTP activity was captured on videotape.

FEW continues to focus on eliminating sex discrimination, increasing career opportunities, advancing women in the Federal sector, and cooperating with other organizations and individuals concerned with equal employment opportunities.

Many BLM employees contributed to the success of the FEW/NTP. Thanks to Service Center Director Marvin LeNoue's generous support of the Federally Employed Women's Program, the following employees (and others we may have missed), were able to participate in making the 1991 FEW/ NTP "the best ever": Angie Sether, Cathy Davis (retired), Joyce Golos, Lynne Price, Nellie Werito, Emily Alvarado, Sue Ashton, Mary Haugland, Kathy Tober, Lee Krebs, Iris Matney, Rosemary Ravenscroft, Louise Trieste, Christina Slowik, Deb Price, Mary Barger, Lee Allen, and William Moody.

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT EVALUATION

During the week of June 3-7, 1991, Phyllis O'Neill of the Division of Personnel joined a team of seven Bureau of Land Management employees to participate in the Personnel Management Evaluation of the Idaho State Office. The purpose for the evaluation was to assess the personnel program to determine its effectiveness in accomplishing BLM's mission and programs.

The team, which was led by Ed Weathersby of the Washington Office, consisted of employees from the Washington Office, the Oregon and Utah State Offices, and the Service Center. Each of the team members possessed expertise in one of the various personnel programs and was responsible for evaluating that program. Upon completion of the evaluation, individual presentations of the findings and recommended actions, if any, were made to the State Director and his staff, and to the Personnel Officer and his staff. The team also prepared a written report of the findings and recommendations that was submitted to the Idaho State Director.

PERSONNEL NEWS

New Employees

Natalie L. Aaron, Secretary, SC-310

Elizabeth A. Araki, Student Trainee, SC-324

Gloria E. Aranda, Computer Clerk, SC-344

Tobi A. Cordova, Personnel Clerk, SC-630

Diana I. Demarse, Voucher Examiner, SC-616

Patrick Jackson, Student Trainee, SC-100

Carol L. Jung, Secretary, SC-616

William F. Krech, Supv. Nat. Res. Spec., SC-214

Janet J. Poorman, Writer-Editor, SC-323

Helen L. Prosser, Supv. Operating Acct., SC-615

Carrol See, Procurement Clerk, SC-651

Dondi E. Sutton, Voucher Examiner, SC-616

Separations

Joan M. Dowds, Voucher Examiner Supervisor, SC-616

James E. Horak, Supv. Qual. Assurance Spec., SC-321

ROLES AND STRUCTURES STUDY COMPLETED IMPLEMENTATION BEGUN

Most, if not all, Service Center employees have heard the phrase "roles and structures" used in various contexts. Most employees know that this was a realignment of functions and positions within various Service Center organizations. Now that the realignment has been completed, it appears an opportune time to take a look at the major realignment related events that have occurred over the preceding 12-month period within the Service Center.

On August 2, 1990, the *Washington Office/Service Center Roles and Structures Study Related to Automation, Information Resource Management, Modernization (AIM)* was completed and approved. This study provided the Bureau with a "project management" approach to the ongoing AIM effort. The study's recommendations had a significant impact on the Service Center, resulting in extensive revisions to mission and functional statements, and a thorough review of each and every position residing within SC-310, SC-320, and SC-340. A deadline of July 1, 1991, was established to accomplish the realignment.

A Service Center Implementation Team was established, composed of representatives from functional organizations, the Program, Budget and Evaluation Staff, and the Division of Personnel. This group met regularly with the Service Center Director and the Associate Director in order to provide technical advice and report on the status of milestone activities. The Implementation Team developed a "skills inventory," which was issued to employees directly affected by the realignment in an effort to assist in the placement of any displaced personnel.

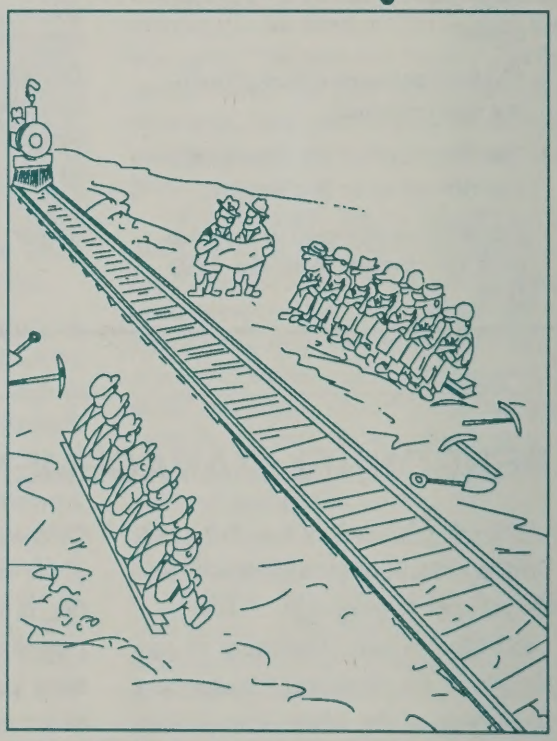
Beginning in March 1991, an extensive position management and classification effort was begun in SC-310, SC-320, and SC-340. This position review was accomplished by three Service Center position classification specialists, supplemented by classifiers from the Idaho and Montana State Offices. From March 1991 well into June 1991, a total of 183 positions were audited and reclassified. Classification actions ranged the spectrum from relatively minor revisions of existing position descriptions to the establishment of entirely new positions. In an effort to expedite the classification process and meet the July 1 deadline, the Service Center requested the Washington Office provide an on-site personnelist to review/approve all classifications/reclassifications GS-13 and above. A representative from the Washington Office subsequently arrived at the Service Center and processed these actions.

During June 1991, members of the Implementation Team, the Management Team, and the Division of Personnel met several times with both the Service Center Director and the Associate Director in order to finalize all realignment actions. A major challenge facing the group was the placement of all 169 Service Center personnel directly affected by the realignment into positions of equal grade and pay, thus avoiding any adverse actions, if possible. A complicating factor in this process were situations where employees' positions were either reduced in grade level or abolished.

As the placement process continued, it soon became evident that nearly all positions within the Service Center would have to be reviewed in order to assure the most efficient placement of personnel/skills. Employees' personnel files were reviewed, in conjunction with the skills inventory, in order to match employees' education/experience with vacant positions for which they qualified. After nearly 2 weeks of meetings, the team was able to place all 169 employees into positions of equal grade and pay for which they qualified. The final results of all placement actions were coordinated with the National Federation of Federal Employees (NFFE) prior to the official notification of the work force.

All personnel actions have now been accomplished reflecting an effective date of June 30, 1991, thus meeting the established deadline.

Service Center Realignment



It took alot of teamwork, but I think we're finally on the right track!

WHAT EXACTLY IS PROJECT MANAGEMENT?

A QUICK LESSON

by Bob Leopold, Chief, Division of Project Management

Project management is something we tend to do naturally. It lets us meet our objectives, which are generally based upon specific requirements. It's the basis for how we allocate our resources, how we plan, and how we schedule our task(s). It usually requires our commitment and holds us accountable to meet our objectives. If followed with skill and common sense, it tends to make life a lot easier, and allows the project to be brought in on schedule and within budget.

Recently, the Service Center has organized itself to emphasize the management of AIM-related projects. The Division of Project Management, specifically, will be supporting these and other projects:

- Geographic Coordinate Data Base - a data collection project
- Data Collection and Validation Project for Status, LLD, Withdrawals, Mining Claims, Case Recordation, and Match/Merge
- Software Improvement Project (Rehost to ALMRS/Modernization) - for current BLM administrative and resource systems
- Records Transition (from manual land and mineral records to automated records) and public room activities
- Eastern States Data Conversion (Status)
- MOSS/ADS/COS/CDS (Geographic Information System)
- Interim 2 (integration of Case Recordation and Mining Claims); hosting of Bond, Surety, Master Name; and maintaining Status, LLD, and Match/Merge
- LAWNET (led by New Mexico State Office)
- ALMRS/Modernization, ALMRS Core Prototype (led by SC-310)

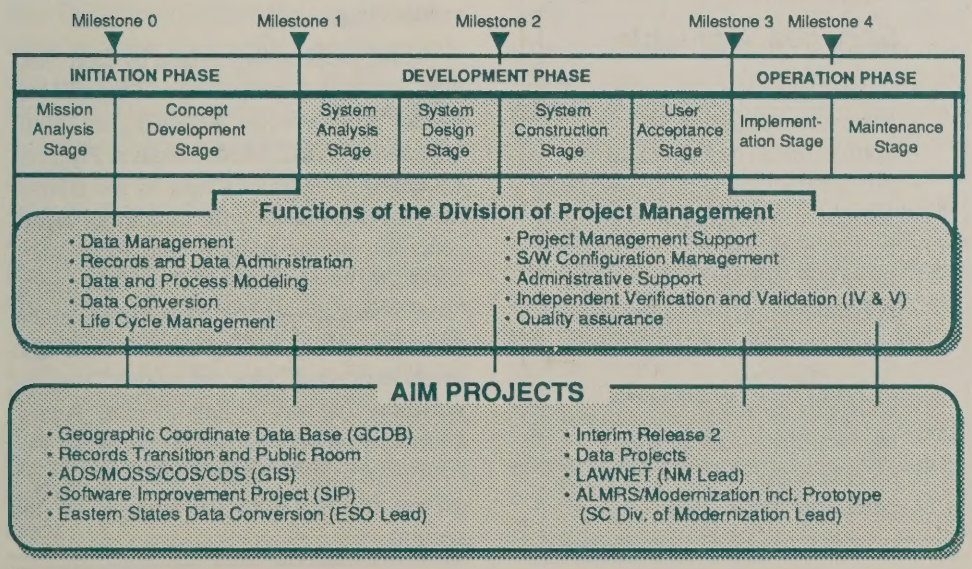
Project management applies a set of principles and methods to project tasks. It requires effective planning for project direction, scheduling, contracting, and resulting replanning. A project usually has a beginning, a middle, and an end, and continually requires management support and oversight from several management levels within the Bureau. The Bureau recognizes this continuum by having Life Cycle Management to ensure project success, whether a very small undertaking or an extremely large one.

The AIM-related projects follow these phases: (1) initiation (beginning), (2) development (middle), and (3) operation and maintenance. Within each phase, products have been identified, along with management control and accountability. This Division is doing the development phase.

The importance of developing an interdisciplinary team led by a project manager for each specific project, and applying specific talents to meet specific schedules, can't be overemphasized if we are to be truly successful. We will be utilizing the practice of matrix management, which allows project managers to bring people in and out of an organization as needed. Certainly at times this will cause conflict, but with adequate project plans, utilizing sophisticated software and forecasting, problems will be minimal. The positives far outweigh the negatives with this new way of doing business. For the AIM projects, it will open up opportunities for all BLMers to get involved through details, both short- and long-term, reassignments, etc., not only to help in the projects at the Service Center, but also to provide support to the field AIM projects.

As projects evolve, communications to the field, and specifically to our users, BLMers, public, etc., will become increasingly more vital to our success. We look forward to making it happen.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT



Providing Superior Project Support

The Service Center has created a Branch of Project Liaison and Support (SC-323) under its Division of Project Management. This Branch will coordinate all AIM-related projects and provide centralized project support. In addition to offering administrative and logistical support, the Branch will help develop software, document projects, and conduct outreach activities.

The new staff includes systems and program analysts; specialists in project management, life cycle management, configuration management, software documentation, and computer security; technical writer/editors; computer assistants; and office automation clerks.

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MAKING DATA INTO USABLE INFORMATION FOR EVERYONE

Data: "See Datum...Something given or admitted; some fact, proposition, quantity, or condition granted or known, from which other facts, propositions, etc., are to be deduced" (from the New Webster Encyclopedic Dictionary).

Today, many organizations are shifting their development philosophies from application programs and their "derived data" to managing data as a corporate "standalone" resource. In existing Bureau systems, such as Case Recordation (CR), On-Line Retrieval Case Access (ORCA), and Mining Claim Recordation (MCR), data usually appear as symbols and values. Data become usable information once they are evaluated in specific situations for reporting, analysis, and management decision processes.

The objective of the Branch of Data and Records Administration and Modeling (SC-322) is to guide and assist the states in preparing Bureau corporate data for loading to new systems currently under development, including the Interim and ALMRS/Modernization Project systems. Managing data – its completeness, accuracy, age, and overall quality – is a critical activity for the Bureau to be responsive and responsible to our internal organizations and the publics to whom we provide information. Extensive coordination is required between Washington IRM and program staffs, project managers, state data administrators, ALMRS and GCDB representatives and managers, GIS coordinators, and special interest groups to ensure that the Bureau's overall data and user goals are met.

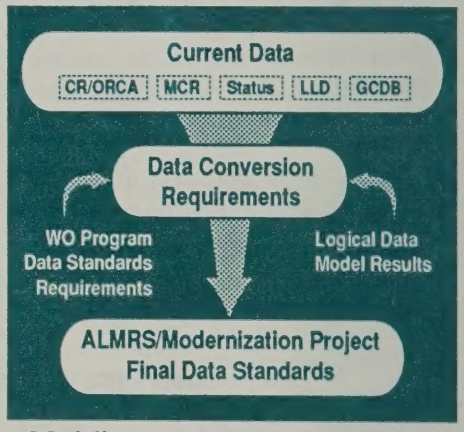
The Branch is divided into three sections that support each other in striving to meet the Bureau's data objectives. This effort requires teamwork, both within the Branch and with the rest of the Division. "Team building is crucial to the Branch to accomplish its goals," says Acting Branch Chief Mike Thompson. "That includes a commitment to educate other staffs at the Service Center and in the field about data functions, activities, and goals."

- Data and Records Administration

This section, supervised by David Nelson, is primarily responsible for the daily management of the Bureau's Data Element Dictionary, fondly referred to as the "DED Book." Data sharing by many Bureau programs involves building a consensus when defining data elements and standard data coding sets. The benefits of data sharing include cost savings, consistent data for analysis, and easier coordination in the interpretation and use of data. Data and Records Administration involves managing the various data standards within Bureau systems and the identification of security and retention requirements for these data. This section also provides the data and records expertise to support Bureau projects approved by the Information Resource Management Review Council.

- Data Integration

This section, supervised by Jenny Saunders, identifies data differences between the current land and minerals records systems and data files, including Case Recordation/ORCA, Mining Claim Recordation, Status, Legal Land Description (LLD), and Geographic Coordinate Data Base (GCDB). Data differences must be translated into data conversion requirements and software programs to assist the states in converting and loading their data to the Interim and ALMRS/Modernization Projectsystems before implementation. Although the Bureau already has data standards for each of its current systems and data files, converting all these standards to a final corporate data standard for use in one new system is a tremendous task. This work effort requires close coordination between the Washington Office, Service Center, State Offices, and Bureau user communities.



- Modeling

This section, supervised by Don Oakland, is currently preparing a "Logical Data Model" to support the ALMRS Core Prototype and ALMRS/Modernization Projects. Modeling is relatively new in the Bureau and provides users with a pictorial representation of the unique data BLM uses. Modeling improves the ability of the user to "see" how data are related and used in their specific activity. The section will also begin managing "process models" that depict the actual way the data are used. Again, coordination between all levels of the Bureau organization and especially with user groups is critical to the success of this section.

Project Support continued from page 5

By providing backup assistance to a project's own staff, the Branch is striving to ensure consistently high quality in project work. This means that projects are properly planned, correctly managed, consistently documented, and operated within established budgets and timeframes. The Branch will also assist in conducting quality assurance reviews on data and AIM projects.

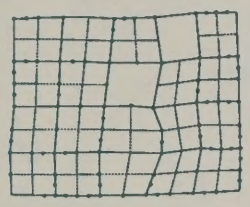
Assistance will be provided to project teams during both development and operation of AIM projects. Technical project management training, instructional training, and Information Resource Management Review Council/Management Team training will also be conducted throughout the Bureau beginning in fall 1991.

Services Available

- project planning
- life cycle management
- configuration management
- project tracking
- software development
- budget planning
- technical editing
- documentation oversight
- equipment acquisition
- space planning
- computer security
- hardware/software analysis
- clerical support
- personnel recruitment

Geographic Coordinates: Linking BLM'S Automated Systems

One goal of automation in BLM is to overlay different types of maps, on computer, to show a variety of information for any given area of land. To accomplish this, there must be common points to properly align each map, regardless of map type, to relate these points to the surface of the earth. By determining and assigning the accurate latitude and longitude values – geographic coordinates – to critical points on these maps, BLM is building the missing link between its information systems.



Most BLM cadastral surveys are based on the Public Land Survey System (PLSS), begun in 1785. This system uses township and section grids, measured in miles. Each township usually includes 36 sections, totaling approximately 36 square miles. Other surveys, such as those of the original 13 colonies, use metes and bounds descriptions, relating to natural landmarks. Due to unsophisticated techniques and sometimes fraudulent work, measurements on these older surveys were often inaccurate.

Land and mineral records, in BLM's case recordation and mining claims systems, use land descriptions that usually do not reference accurate cadastral or geographic points. However, the accurate linkage of this information to survey plats and other land data is necessary to complete an integrated system.

The goal of the Geographic Coordinate Data Base (GCDB) Project is to determine accurate geographic coordinate values for every point in the PLSS. This includes survey corners for all townships, sections, 40-acre parcels, smaller lots, and special surveys (nonrectangular surveys, such as mining claims and homestead entries.) These coordinates are being collected by common methods, procedures, and standards established for all states.

The priority for the GCDB Project is to collect data for lands in which the Federal Government has an interest, either through ownership, mineral rights, or other use. Data collection will begin in the 11 western states, which contain most of the public lands.

Currently, BLM and contracting staffs are collecting, computing, and entering coordinate values into GCDB data files for Alaska, Colorado, Idaho, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, and Wyoming. Work is currently being planned for Arizona, California, Montana, and Utah. As of June 1990, coordinates for 3,898 townships in these states had been collected and computed, and 2,329 of these had been accepted after extensive quality reviews.

Eastern States Office (ESO) is currently developing a collection plan for the 31 states under its jurisdiction. The metes and bounds surveys there make different methods and procedures necessary. Coordinate data for the remaining states, including Hawaii, Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, and Washington, is not yet being collected, but will eventually be incorporated into the GCDB Project.

Each state currently active in the Project is divided into numbered "task areas." These areas are prioritized chronologically for data collection, based on the needs of each state as determined by each State Director.

States are also categorized by township complexity, ranging from 1 through 6. The higher the category number, the more complex the township, due to the number of special surveys conducted in an area. These categories may be a factor in the priority of data collection, since the simplest areas can be completed the fastest and with the least expense.

Surveyors and other staff are computing the coordinate values for PLSS points using primarily PCCS (PLSS Coordinate Computational System) software. In Alaska, coordinates are digitized from the AHDS (Automated Hydrologic Digitizing System). These coordinate points are verified using other control data – digitized coordinates from topographical maps contained in the ADS (Automated Digitizing System) files, coordinates from the Global Positioning System (GPS), coordinates from private surveys, and other control points that are verified to be accurate within the established standards. Control data is obtained by many means, including aerial photography, field surveys, satellite imagery, and various survey methods.

Through the GCDB process, inaccurate survey data are being identified. Along with computed coordinate values for each point, a reliability number is entered, showing within how many feet of the actual point the values are considered to be accurate; this is "relative positional accuracy." As information and collection methods improve in the future, the GCDB can be updated to include more accurate coordinate values.

Along with coordinates for each point, additional information is being collected for the Project. Among 117 "attributes" (types of information) available for each survey point, there are 54 that have been deemed necessary to build the data base and allow the required integration of data. These attributes, such as state, township, and principal meridian, are being included with coordinates for each point.

For contractor-collected data, a quality assurance check is made by the contract-employees themselves, before delivery to BLM. Additional quality assurance checks are made by the State Offices for all coordinate data, according to the GCDB Quality Control Plan. The Service Center GCDB Staff also samples the accepted GCDB data of each state to ensure conformity to data collection standards.

GCDB: A CRUCIAL PIECE OF THE ALMRS/CORE PROTOTYPE

The ALMRS/Core Prototype is a project designed to integrate geographic coordinates and land status data to demonstrate a usable application of the upcoming ALMRS/Modernization Project. The Prototype is using a sample area of 120 townships north of Farmington, New Mexico, within BLM's Albuquerque District. The New Mexico GCDB Staff has already collected coordinate data for 43 of those townships, and expects to collect the remainder by October 1991. This coordinate data is necessary to successfully complete the Prototype Project, and its collection is a high priority for the GCDB Staff.

30 YEARS OF CARING

This year's Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) will run from October 1-21. Activities will include an SC-wide kickoff meeting on September 30 at the auditorium in Building 56, a DFC-wide CFC fair on October 1, and an SC auction and bakeoff on October 9.

The kickoff meeting will include CFC speakers and a 7-minute video. The fair, which promises to be even bigger and better than last year's, will feature numerous presentations, dozens of booths and displays staffed by local agencies that receive CFC contributions, and entertainment throughout the day.

The auction and bakeoff will be similar to last year's festive chili cookoff and auction. Baked goods will be judged and subsequently sold, along with numerous other donated goods and services, at the auction. Ray Boyd (SC-213) will be the auctioneer.

All of these events offer a chance to have some fun while supporting the many agencies that provide needed services in our community. Keep an eye out for flyers and posters for further details.

Combined Federal Campaign
Community Fair
October 1, 1991
8:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Building 56
Denver Federal Center

CLIMBING COLORADO'S HIGHEST HUNDRED

Colorado has 54 peaks over 14,000 feet high — for many people, climbing all of them would be a strenuous but rewarding challenge. But some have gone beyond this goal and climbed Colorado's highest 100 peaks. About 40 people have succeeded in this, and Bob Ader, Chief of GIS Services, is one of these dedicated few.

Bob's climbing career began in 1986, when a successful ascent of Longs Peak in Rocky Mountain National Park whetted his appetite. "That's the experience that really lit the fire," says Bob, who was 32 at the time. A "late starter," Bob hadn't done much climbing or hiking prior to his Longs Peak initiation.

Bob then proceeded to travel all over Colorado to climb the highest hundred. And, not surprisingly, he has had some adventures along the way. Twice, he had to drop his metal ice axe and retreat back down the mountain as lightning threatened. On one of these occasions, a long spark jumped from his ice axe to his leg!

On a winter ascent of Mt. Antero, Bob was in a steep snow gully when a companion set off an avalanche that ran in the adjacent gully. The snow in Bob's gully settled with a low-pitched "wwumphhh" and then cracked above where he was standing, but it did not avalanche.

To avoid bad weather and crowds, Bob and his partners sometimes begin hiking at 3:00 or 4:00 a.m., using flashlights to find their way in the cold darkness of early morning. Even so, Bob has had to abort half a dozen climbs because of weather, returning to climb another day.

While most of the top 100 peaks have walk-up routes, Bob prefers to stay off the beaten path. Some peaks involve technical climbing using ropes and other gear, but Bob doesn't mind this at all. He enjoys rock climbing and is comfortable on moderately difficult (5.6 to 5.7) routes.

Bob has now climbed over 130 peaks and hopes to climb the highest 200 in Colorado, after which he'll go back and reclimb the peaks he has enjoyed the most. Bob has also climbed in the Tetons but has not gone on any major overseas expeditions.

There are many reasons why people climb mountains. According to Bob, "The best part about climbing is seeing the state, seeing things you can't see from the car. Colorado is such a wonderful place, especially in the winter. It's so beautiful in the winter..."

Marjorie, Bob's wife, supports his climbing interest, although she does get a trifle concerned when Bob is late returning from a trip. Bob's two little girls, born in 1989 and this year, have reordered his priorities somewhat as well.

However, there is another aspect to Bob's mountaineering interests that allows him to stay home safe and sound by the hearth. Bob is an enthusiastic collector of rare, out-of-print first editions of mountaineering books written by early Himalayan surveyors and climbers.

Bob has about 400 books gleaned from bookstores all over the country. He started collecting mountaineering books just after he started climbing. Bob took a course offered by a local bookstore that gave him the knowledge and information sources—including lists of used book dealers across the country—he needed to pursue his new hobby.

The books in Bob's collection have cost him anywhere from $3 to $1,000. He is constantly in touch with mountaineering, travel, and exploration bookstores nationwide and also makes frequent pilgrimages to Kittredge, Colorado, to visit Chessler Books, which is the largest mountaineering bookstore in the United States.

Bob estimates that he has read about one-third of the books in his collection, and notes, "I hope to read all of them someday."